

PATENT

-1-

## IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Patent Application of

Michial Duff Howell et al.

Application No.: NEW

Filed: HEREWITH

For: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR  
PREPARING SEMICONDUCTOR  
WAFERS FOR MEASUREMENT

Group Art Unit: Unknown

Examiner: Unknown

**INFORMATION DISCLOSURE  
STATEMENT**121 Spear Street, Suite 290  
San Francisco, CA 94105  
(415) 512-1312

M/S PATENT APPLICATION  
 Commissioner for Patents  
 P.O. Box 1450  
 Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

Applicant(s) submit(s) herewith patents, publications or other information [attached hereto and listed on the attached Form PTO-1449 (modified)] of which they are aware, which they believe(s) may be material to the examination of this application and in respect of which there may be a duty to disclose in accordance with 37 CFR § 1.56.

This Information Disclosure Statement:

- (a)  accompanies the new patent application submitted herewith. 37 CFR § 1.97(a).
- (b)  is filed within three months after the filing date of the application or within three months after the date of entry of the national stage of a PCT application as set forth in 37 CFR § 1.491.
- (c)  as far as is known to the undersigned, is filed before the mailing date of a first Office Action on the merits, or before a first office action after filing a Request for Continued Examination under §1.114.
- (d)  is filed after the first office action and more than three months after the application's filing date or PCT national stage date of entry filing but, as far as is known to the undersigned, prior to the mailing date of either a final rejection or a

notice of allowance, whichever occurs first, and is accompanied by either the fee (\$180) set forth in 37 CFR § 1.17(p) or a certification as specified in 37 CFR § 1.97(e), as checked below.

- (e)  is filed after the mailing date of either a final rejection or a notice of allowance, whichever occurred first, and the Issue Fee has not been paid, and is accompanied by the fee (\$130) set forth in 37 CFR § 1.17(i)(1) and a certification as specified in 37 CFR § 1.97(e), as checked below. This document is to be considered as a petition requesting consideration of the information disclosure statement.

[If either of boxes (d) or (e) is checked above, the following "certification" under 37 CFR § 1.97(e) may need to be completed.] The undersigned certifies that:

- (f)  Each item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was cited in a communication mailed from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application not more than three months prior to the filing of this information disclosure statement.
- (g)  No item of information contained in this information disclosure statement was cited in a communication mailed from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application or, to the knowledge of the undersigned after making reasonable inquiry, was known to any individual designated in 37 CFR § 1.56(c) more than three months prior to the filing of this information disclosure statement.

A list of the patent(s) or publication(s) is set forth on the attached Form PTO-1449 (Modified).

A copy of the items on PTO-1449 (Modified) is supplied herewith:

- (h)  each (i)  none (j)  only those listed below:

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Those patent(s) or publication(s) which are marked with an asterisk (\*) in the attached form PTO-1449 (Modified) are not supplied because they were previously cited by or submitted to the Office in a prior application no. 09/859,917, filed May 17, 2001, and relied upon in this application for an earlier filing date under 35 U.S.C. § 120.

A concise explanation of relevance of the items listed on form PTO-1449 (Modified) is:

- (k)  not given  
(l)  given for each listed item

- (m)  given for only non-English language listed item(s) [Required]  
(n)  is in the form of an English language copy of a Search Report from a foreign patent office, issued in a counterpart application, which refers to the relevant portions of the references [copy attached].

The Examiner is reminded that a "concise explanation of the relevance" of the submitted items "may be nothing more than identification of the particular figure or paragraph of the patent or publication which has some relation to the claimed invention," MPEP § 609.

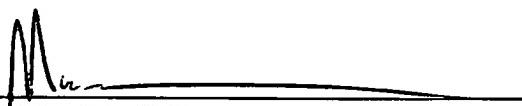
While the information and references disclosed in this Information Disclosure Statement may be "material" pursuant to 37 CFR § 1.56, it is not intended to constitute an admission that any patent, publication or other information referred to therein is "prior art" for this invention unless specifically designated as such.

In accordance with 37 CFR § 1.97(g), the filing of this Information Disclosure Statement shall not be construed to mean that a search has been made or that no other material information as defined in 37 CFR § 1.56(a) exists. It is submitted that the Information Disclosure Statement is in compliance with 37 CFR § 1.98 and MPEP § 609 and the Examiner is respectfully requested to consider the listed references.

Respectfully submitted,

STALLMAN & POLLOCK LLP

Dated: July 21, 2003

By:   
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